

Message Text

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46

ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 PM-03 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO C/SECSTATE WASHDC 5836

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR, YE

SUBJ: BIO DATA ON NEW YAR AMBASSADOR TO SYRIA

1. FOLLOWING IS SELECTIVE BIOGRAPHIC REPORT CONCERNING
5/5/75 APPOINTMENT OF LTC ALI ABU LUHUM AS YAR ENVOY
TO SYRIA.

2. ALI ABU LUHUM IS ZAYDI MOSLEM AROUND 38 YEARS OLD FROM
AREA NORTHEAST OF SANA CALLED NAHM. DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH.
HOLDS RANK OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL (MUQADDAM) IN YEMEN ARMY
(CURRENTLY HIGHEST RANK) AND PRIOR CURRENT ASSIGNMENT
WAS INFLUENTIAL COMMANDER OF ASIFA (STORM) ELITE FORCE
OF RESERVIST UNITS. WAS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF
MILITARY COMMAND COUNCIL FORMED 6/13/74 FOLLOWING
MILITARY TAKEOVER.

3. ALONG WITH HALF-BROTHER SINAN ABU LUHUM (IMPERIOUS
FORMER HODEIDA GOVERNOR) AND NEPHEW DIRHAM ABU LUHUM
(FORMER MILITARY COMMANDER OF TAIZ REGION), SUPPORTED
FORMER PM MOSHIN AL-AINI (MARRIED TO ALI'S
HALF-SISTER) WHILE LATTER PARRIED WITH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN
IBRAHIM AL-HAMDI FOR PREEMINENT POLITICAL POSITION IN
YEMEN. IN HAMDI'S INITIAL COUNTERMOVE AGAINST
AINI-ABU LUHUM CLAN, ALI REMOVED FROM COMMAND COUNCIL
DURING FIRST RESHUFFLE 10/24/74. AINI SUBSEQUENTLY

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RESIGNED 2/75, AND HAMDI EFFORTS TO POLITICALLY EMASCULATE

AINI-ABU LUHUMS SUCCESSFUL THIS SPRING. AINI NOW UNOFFICIALLY IN PARIS, WHILE DIRHAM DISPATCHED TO CAIRO AS MILITARY ATTACHE 5/10/75.

4. IN TERMS DOMESTIC YAR POSITIONS, ABU LUHUMS VIEWED BY SOME AS CORRUPT BUT EFFICIENT AND PROGRESSIVE, WHILE OTHERS SEE THEM AS CORRUPT, AMBITIOUS MEN WHOSE TIES TO IRAQ AND LIBYA ARE DANGEROUS. ALI ABU LUHUM HAS REPUTATION FOR DYNAMISM, ALTHOUGH OTHERS CHARACTERIZE HIS BEHAVIOR AS ERRATIC. IN OUR CONTACTS WITH HIM, DID NOT APPEAR OVERLY INTELLIGENT IN CONTRAST WITH OLDER HALF-BROTHER SINAN. IN RECENT YEARS, HAS BEEN LOOKING TO LIBYA AND IRAQ FOR SUPPORT, AND IN CURRENT CONTEXT, SOMEWHAT IRONIC THAT HE SHOULD BE SENT TO SYRIA AS POLITICAL

EXILE CUM AMBASSADOR. HAS BEEN PERSONALLY FRIENDLY TO EMBASSY OFFICERS, BUT NOT BELIEVED HELPFUL TO US INTERESTS. SCOTES

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